

Information for Clinicians considering acting as DMPs

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Guide for Designated Medical Practitioners (DMPs) Supporting Trainee Independent and Supplementary AHP Prescribers

Background

Independent Prescribing

Two distinct types of independent nurse prescribing have been developed in the UK. The first, prescribing by community nurses from the limited Nurse Prescribers' Formulary for District Nurses and Health Visitors (NPF), and the NPF has now been renamed the Nurse Prescribers formulary for Community Practitioners (NPFCP). The district nurse and health visitor prescribers are now known as community practitioners.

The second form of independent prescribing for nurses allowed registered nurses and midwives with additional prescribing training (known as extended formulary nurse prescribers) to prescribe from the Nurse Prescribers Extended Formulary (NPEF).

From May 2006, legislation permitted independent prescribing for nurses and pharmacists from a full formulary (excluding most controlled drugs and unlicensed medicines). Legislation has subsequently been amended and nurses and pharmacists are now able to independently prescribe controlled drugs, with a few exceptions and unlicensed medicines.

Pharmacists in England have been able to train as independent prescribers since autumn 2006.

Supplementary Prescribing

Supplementary prescribing is a voluntary partnership between an independent prescriber (who must be a doctor or a dentist) and a supplementary prescriber, to implement an agreed patient specific clinical management plan (CMP), with the patient's agreement. It is a legal requirement for a CMP to be in place before supplementary prescribing can begin.

The training of supplementary and independent prescribers is laid down by the professional and regulatory bodies, the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) for pharmacists, The Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) for Allied Health Professionals and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) for nurses and midwives. All three bodies decree that the student will be supported by a clinical supervisor; the Designated Medical Practitioner (DMP) who will supervise the student **during a minimum** of 12 days of practice. The role of the DMP is vital to the successful training of future prescribers. You have been allocated to this role because of your experience in the field where the trainee will be practicing once they qualify as a prescribers and also because you have experience of facilitating learning.

Introduction

The regulatory bodies for each profession (NMC/GPhC/HCPC), requires that all students studying to become prescribers complete a period of learning in practice which lasts a minimum of 12 x 7.5hr days (or equivalent).

The purpose of this period of supervised practice is to demonstrate to the student how an experienced prescriber approaches the following aspects of patient care in relation to prescribing:

- Physical examinations
- Monitoring and assessment of responses to prescribing
- Effective communication (with patient, independent prescriber and wider care team)
- Record keeping.

In particular the period of learning in practice will help the student

- confirm the clinical areas in which s/he will be prescribing
- define his/her scope of prescribing practice
- highlight any concerns about their future prescribing role
- address some of the practicalities involved
- identify and explore any barriers to their future prescribing practice at an early stage.

You will need to work with the student to cover these points and ensure that they identify any additional learning needs relating specifically to their future prescribing practice. However it may be more appropriate for the student to spend most of their time in practice with practitioners other than the DMP.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is important that both yourself and the student know what you have to do before you start the period of learning in practice in order to get the best out of the time.

The **Student** will

- Have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes for the course (these vary between Health Education Institutions)
- Have a clear understanding of the HCPC/NMC/GPhC standards in relation to prescribing and apply these standards both in defining his/her scope of practice and in working towards the proficiencies expected.
- Define the professional scope of their prescribing practice in conjunction with the DMP
- Keep an accurate log of the hours spent in the period of learning in practice
- Make reflective portfolio entries which map against the overarching competencies/behavioural indicators
- Discuss the portfolio entries with the DMP at the planning stage and on completion
- Discuss with the DMP progression towards achievement of practice competencies
- Work with the DMP to identify ways in which learning needs and achieve practice competencies may be met

The **DMP** will

- Have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes for the course
- Assist the student in defining the scope of their professional independent prescribing practice
- Assist the student in identifying learning needs and unmet competencies
- Discuss the portfolio entries with the student at the planning stage and on completion of each entry
- Sign and date each portfolio entry as a true record of evidence of practice competencies
- Plan learning opportunities in conjunction with the student which can contribute to unmet learning needs and the achievement of practice competencies
- Sign a final statement which indicates that in the opinion of the DMP the student has fulfilled the statutory time in practice requirement (12 x 7.5 hrs or equivalent) and has met both the learning outcomes for the period of learning in practice and the HCPC/NMC/GPhC Standards

It is not expected that the DMP will be with the student all day for the full 12 days. However time when the student is not with the DMP must be planned so that the student is still given opportunities to learn.

How does the DMP help the Student?

As the DMP, you are required to provide the student with opportunities to learn. You should aim to encourage the student to reflect on their learning experiences through the use of their portfolio and to use this reflective learning to develop clinical reasoning in practice.

In addition you will give the student opportunities to observe how you:

- conduct a consultation/patient interview
- undertake physical examinations
- interact with patients/carers and other health care professionals
- develop a working diagnosis and manage patients within a care plan.

You may discuss with the student:

- Certain cases which illustrate clinical management issues
- The role of prescribing in the care of these patients
- Other prescribing issues which you think will help the student to meet the learning outcomes and competencies of the Programme.

Ultimately you need to provide the student with opportunities to carry out consultations and suggest clinical management and prescribing options, which you can use as the basis for discussion

